

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of all the claims replaces all prior claims in the application. Kindly amend the claims, without prejudice, as follows;

Claims 1-23: (Canceled).

24. (Currently amended). A toothbrush bristle and a bristle carrier together forming a toothbrush, said bristle comprising a plastic monofilament defining in a cross-sectional area thereof at least first and second adjoining zones and at least one region of preferred breaking between said first and second zones,

said first and second zones being defined from a divided mass flow that is rejoined along an interface to define said at least one region of preferred breaking,

said interface being substantially free of an internal void,

wherein a free end of the bristle is rounded, and

at [a free] the end of said toothbrush bristle remote from said carrier said first zone being separated from said second zone by breakage along said interface.

25. (Withdrawn). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein the first zone comprises a first plastic material and the second zone comprises a second plastic material, and wherein said first plastic material differs from said second plastic material.

26. (currently amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein the first [zone] and second zones each comprise a first plastic material.

27. (Withdrawn). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein at least one said zone defines a cavity.

28. (Previously presented). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein at least one said zone comprises at least one filler material.

29. (Previously presented). A toothbrush bristle and a bristle carrier together forming a toothbrush, said bristle comprising a plastic monofilament defining in a cross-sectional area thereof at least first and second adjoining zones and at least one region of preferred breaking between said first and second zones,

wherein at least one said zone comprises at least one filler material, and
wherein adjacent said zones comprise different filler materials.

30. (Previously presented). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein at least one said zone comprises a colorant.

31. (previously presented). A toothbrush bristle and a bristle carrier together forming a toothbrush, said bristle comprising a plastic monofilament defining in a cross-sectional area thereof at least first and second adjoining zones and at least one region of preferred breaking between said first and second zones, and

wherein adjacent said zones comprise different colorants.

32. (previously presented). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein the region of preferred breaking is defined in a plastic extrudate.

33. (Previously presented). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein said zones are arranged in approximately mirror symmetry with an axis of the bristle.

34. (Previously presented). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein said zones are arranged approximately in point symmetry with an axis of the bristle.

35. (Previously presented). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein said first and second zones each occupy approximately equal portions of the cross-sectional area.

36. (Currently amended). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein [a] the free end of the bristle is split over the preferred breaking region directed along a longitudinal axis of the bristle.

37. (Previously presented). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 36, wherein the split region extends between approximately 10% and approximately 25% of a length of the bristle.

38. (Previously presented). A toothbrush bristle and a bristle carrier together forming a toothbrush, said bristle comprising a plastic monofilament defining in a cross-sectional area thereof at least first and second adjoining zones and at least one region of preferred breaking between said first and second zones, and

wherein a free end of the bristle is rounded.

39. (Previously presented). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein the bristle comprises a plastic selected from a group of plastics consisting of polyester, polyamide and mixtures thereof.

40. (Previously presented). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein a major lateral dimension of the cross-sectional area of the monofilament is between 0.1 mm and 0.25 mm.

41. (Previously presented). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 40, wherein the lateral dimension is between 0.15 mm and 0.18 mm.

42. (Withdrawn). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 40, wherein the lateral dimension is a diameter.

43. (Previously presented). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein the cross-sectional area comprises a shape selected from a group of shapes consisting of a three-leaf clover, a multiple-leaf clover, a three-point star and a multiple-point star.

44. (Previously presented). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein a circumferential surface of the monofilament has a helical structure.

45. (Withdrawn). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 27, further comprising a second plastic material contained within said cavity and extending across at least a portion of a cross-sectional area of the cavity.

46. (Withdrawn). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 45, wherein said second plastic material fills the cross-sectional area of the cavity.

47. (Withdrawn). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 45, wherein said second plastic material is different from a plastic material defining a portion of a boundary of said cavity.

48. (Withdrawn). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein said region of preferred breaking is at least partially defined by a void adjacent said first and second zones.

49. (Previously presented). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 24, wherein said region of preferred breaking is at least partially defined by at least one indentation on an exterior surface of said bristle at a location adjacent said first and second zones.

50. (Currently amended/ withdrawn). A method of manufacturing a toothbrush having a toothbrush bristle, comprising the steps of

forming a plastic monofilament having a cross-sectional area,

forming a first zone disposed over a first portion of said cross-sectional area,

forming a second zone disposed over a second portion of said cross-sectional area adjacent said first portion,

forming an interface between adjoining said first and second zones to define a region of preferred breaking along which said first and second zone are frangible,

providing a bristle carrier, [and]

mounting an end of the bristle to the bristle carrier, and

end-rounding a free end of the bristle.

51. (Withdrawn). The method of claim 50, wherein the first zone is formed comprising a first plastic material, the second zone is formed comprising a second plastic material, and wherein said first plastic material differs from said second plastic material.

52. (Currently amended/ withdrawn). The method of claim 50, wherein the first [zone] and second zones are each formed comprising a first plastic material.

53. (Withdrawn). The method of claim 50, wherein at least one said zone forms a boundary of a cavity.

54. (Withdrawn). The method of claim 50, wherein the first zone and second zones are formed by the steps of dividing and subsequently rejoining a melt flow forming the monofilament.

55. (Withdrawn). The method of claim 50, further comprising the steps of
twisting the monofilament about its longitudinal axis, and
fixing the twisted monofilament.

56. (Withdrawn). The method of claim 50, wherein the step of fixing further comprises treating with a chemical agent.

57. (Currently amended/ withdrawn). The method of claim 50, further comprising the step of splitting [a] the free end of the bristle in the preferred breaking region in a longitudinal direction.

58. (Withdrawn). The method of claim 57, wherein the step of splitting comprises subjecting the free end to a mechanical load.

59. (Currently amended/ withdrawn). The method as claimed in claim 57, wherein the step of end-rounding the free end of the bristle initiates the step of splitting [comprises end-rounding the free end of the bristle].

60. (Currently amended/ withdrawn). The method as claimed in claim 50, [further comprising] wherein the step of end-rounding [a free end of the bristle] is performed subsequent to said step of mounting to the bristle carrier.

61. (Withdrawn). The method as claimed in claim 55, wherein the step of twisting further comprises drawing the monofilament from a rotating central reel.

62. (Withdrawn). The method as claimed in claim 55, wherein the step of twisting further comprises drawing the monofilament from a stationary central reel through a rotating nozzle.

63. (New). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 38, wherein the first and second zones each comprise a first plastic material.

64. (New). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 38, wherein the first zone comprises a first plastic material and the second zone comprises a second plastic material, and wherein said first plastic material differs from said second plastic material.

65. (New). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 38, wherein said first and second zones each occupy approximately equal portions of the cross-sectional area.

66. (New). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 38, wherein a major lateral dimension of the cross-sectional area of the monofilament is between 0.1 mm and 0.25 mm.

67. (New). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 38, wherein the cross-sectional area comprises a shape selected from a group of shapes consisting of a three-leaf clover, a multiple-leaf clover, a three-point star and a multiple-point star.

68. (New). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 38, wherein a circumferential surface of the monofilament has a helical structure.

69. (New). The toothbrush as claimed in claim 38, wherein said region of preferred breaking is at least partially defined by at least one indentation on an exterior surface of said bristle at a location adjacent said first and second zones.